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# KINGSBRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
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# REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year

1943.

KINGSBRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

Council Offices, Fore Street, Kingsbridge, S.Devon.

Telephone: Kingsbridge 2196

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Council Offices,
Plympton.
Clerk to M.O.H., Miss Prowse,

Telephone: Plympton 2244

Manor House,
Kingsbridge.
Clerk to M.O.H., Miss Hendrickson.
Telephone: Kingsbridge 2004

SANITARY INSPECTOR.

Council Offices, Fore Street, Kingsbridge, S.Devon.

Telephone: Kingsbridge 2122.

# KINGSBRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

## MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S REPORT.

## for the YEAR ending DEC. 31st, 1943.

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Medical Officer of Health: DR. W. C. SMALES, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Deputy Medical Officer of Health: DR. W. H. COWPER, M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O.

Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector: E. GELLENDER, A.R.S.I.

MR. CHAIRMAN, MISS TREEBY AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Report for the year ending December 31st, 1943.

### STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres) - 1147½

Population - The Registrar General's estimate of the resident population - 2965.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1943) according to the Rate Books - 919

Rateable Value - £20,316

Sum represented by a Penny Rate - (estimated) £81.

The town of Kingsbridge is the market centre of an agricultural and highly attractive country district, and its inhabitants are mainly engaged in commerce. Unemployment has not had any prejudical effect on the general health of the community.

The social conditions are generally favourable to health and longevity.

### VITAL STATISTICS.

Live Births - Total, 34; Male, 21; Female, 13.
Live (legitimate) - Male, 19; Female, 11.
Live (illegitimate) - Male, 2; Female, 2.

BIRTH RATE per 1,000 of the estimated population - 11.47

STILL BIRTHS - Nil. Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births - Nil.

DEATHS - 64. Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population - 21.58

Deaths (from Puerperal Causes) - 1.

Death rate of Infants under one year of age. All infants per 1,000 live births - 58.82.

Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births - 25.00
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births - 250.00.

Deaths from Cancer (all ages) - 10
Deaths from Measles ( all ages ) - Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) - Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under two years of age) - Nil.

The conditions of occupation and of environment on the whole have not had a prejudical influence on the general health or mortality.

## GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

The Public Health Officers of the Authority are a Medical Officer of Health (also Medical Officer of Health of the Plympton Rural and Kingsbridge Rural Districts, Assistant County Medical Officer, and School Medical Inspector, Devon County Council).

Deputy Medical Officer of Health (occasional). One full-time Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.

LABORATORY FACILITIES are provided by the County Council for the examination of milk and water in addition to the usual bacteriological examinations.

PROVISION OF ANTITOXIN - Medical men practising in the district can obtain a free supply of Diphtheria Antitoxin and Scarlatinal Serum. Material is also supplied for the immunisation of children of the district against Diphtheria free of cost.

THE SOUTH HAMS COTTAGE HOSPITAL provides 16 beds for patients from Kingsbridge and the surrounding district:-

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Men's ward | ... | 6 beds |
| Women's ward | ... | 6 beds |
| Children's Cots | ... | 2 |
| Private wards. | ... | 2 - 1 bed each |

It is supported by voluntary effort.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL - None in the district, but by arrangements with the Kingsbridge Rural District Council and with the Plymouth City Council, infectious cases requiring hospital treatment may be sent to the Modbury Auxiliary Isolation Hospital and the Swilly Isolation Hospital, Plymouth, respectively.

The arrangements referred to are provisional only, pending the completion and adoption of a Scheme under Section 63, of the Local Government Act, 1929, for the provision of hospital accommodation for this part of the Administrative County and which Scheme is in the course of preparation.

NURSING IN THE HOME - The Kingsbridge Nursing Association is doing excellent work.

MIDWIVES - The Midwives Act is administered by the County Council.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE CENTRE - There is a Centre in Kingsbridge which is open on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays in each month.

VENEREAL DISEASES TREATMENT. At the Venereal Disease Dept., City Hospital, Plymouth. Female in-patients are also sent to St.Mary's Home, Exeter. A refund of rail or bus fare can be made in suitable cases by applying to the Medical Officer of the Centre or to the County Medical Officer.

Treatment is also available from a certain number of selected General Medical Practitioners specially approved for the purpose by the County Council, and Ministry of Health. There is one such practitioner at Modbury and another at Kingsbridge.

ORTHOPAEDIC TREATMENT is available through the Devon Association for Orthopaedics as In-Patients at Exeter and Ivybridge; and for adults at Mount Gold Hospital, Plymouth. For Out-Patients there is a clinic at Kingsbridge and the South West Clinic which deals with this district as well is held at the Mutley Hall Assembly Rooms, Plymouth.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) DURING THE YEAR 1943.

| Disease | Total cases notified | Admitted to Hospital | Deaths |
|---|---|---|---|
| Scarlet Fever | 8 | 2 | - |
| Diphtheria | - | - | - |
| Erysipelas | 1 | - | - |
| Measles | 19 | - | - |
| Pneumonia | 1 | - | - |
| TOTALS | 29 | 2 | - |

Scarlet Fever shows an increase, 8 cases being notified. The disease continued to be of a mild character.

Diphtheria. I would again emphasise that in the treatment of Diphtheria, serum should be given at the earliest possible moment, and preferably in one adequately large dose.

The doctor should never wait for the laboratory report before giving antitoxin if he considers on clinical grounds that the patient may be suffering from Diphtheria.

Every attempt should be made by means of bus or passenger train services, special messenger, or by personal delivery to ensure that the swab reaches the laboratory in as short a time as possible after it is taken.

It is important to obtain immediate medical advice in cases of suspected Diphtheria.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION. 34 children were fully protected during the year, and 5 children received one injection only.

TUBERCULOSIS
NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1943.

| | New Cases | | | | Deaths | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Respiratory | | Non-respiratory | | Respiratory | | Non-respiratory | |
| Age Period | M. | F. | M. | F. | M. | F. | M. | F. |
| 5 - 10 years | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 10 - 20 years | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | - |
| 20 - 25 years | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 25 - 35 years | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| 35 - 45 years | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 45 - 55 years | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 55 - 70 years | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 70 and over | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| TOTALS | 5 | 5 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - |

## SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

WATER SUPPLY (Moorland Supply), from Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board.

There are three reservoirs, one at West Alvington of 80,000 gallons, the Town reservoir of 38,000 gallons and Slade with a capacity of 50,000 gallons which is shared with the Rural District of Kingsbridge. Out of a total of 877 houses, 851 are served by the public piped water supply, those served by a private piped water supply are 20, and 6 houses have a supply from a well. Some of the mains are old and there is a lack of pressure in one or two areas.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE. The system is satisfactory.

PUBLIC CLEANSING. The pre-war systems of collection and disposal have been continued without loss of efficiency.

HOUSING. Overcrowding continues though to a less extent than in the previous year.

Enemy action. Conditions were exceptionally difficult during the first four months of the year when 875 houses were damaged by enemy action. Of this number 251 or 27% of the total number of houses in the district were classed as CA or CB damage.

FOOD SUPPLY. Amounts of unfit food destroyed:-

| | |
|---|---|
| Beef | 6 cwt. 31 lbs. |
| Pork | 4 cwt. 36 lbs. |
| Mutton | 2 cwt. 8 lbs. |
| Other unfit foodstuffs | 10 cwt. 49 lbs. |
| Various tinned foods | 309 tins. |
| Dried eggs. | 386 tins. |

INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND DISINFECTIONS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of houses disinfected | 7 |
| Notifiable infectious diseases | 7 (scarlet fever) |

NUISANCES.

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of complaints received | 3 |
| Number remedied | 3. |

Your obedient Servant,

W.C.SMALES.

Medical Officer of Health.